served on the Health Advisory Commission under President Jimmy Carter. Winson Hudson is a remarkable woman who overcame tremendous obstacles, threats, and reprisals to make change.

Both Hudson and Braden symbolize the unsung heroines of early civil rights activism. The tremendous contributions of these women and others like them have often been overlooked or ignored by scholars. Much like other recent scholarly work on women leaders—including Cynthia Fleming’s book on SNCC activist Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, and Joanne Grant’s biography of longtime leader Ella Baker—these studies highlight the ways in which women often work outside formal organizations. Beliefs have fallen out of favor as an explanation for civil rights activism, yet, in each case, these women were driven by high ideals. The complexity of their ideological development defies current social-movement explanations of what has been called “cognitive conversion.” Despite moments of individual illumination, the process was long and gradual, often taking place outside the context of a social movement, long before any “conversion.” Social movements did not create these women’s consciousness; rather, their consciousness created the movement. They and others set the stage, provided seasoned know-how, and served as mentors to the young activists of the late 1950s and 1960s. Often operating outside of movement organizations, women such as Anne Braden and Winson Hudson sought on their own to secure justice and civil rights. Against the odds, they succeeded in transforming the status quo even when those they sought to help rejected them out of fear or ignorance. They did not enjoy the support of a “beloved community,” a movement infrastructure, or other institutions, including churches. Yet, Anne Braden and Winson Hudson sustained themselves through faith and an undying belief that they could and must make a difference.

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Africa and the Middle East


In this work, the author traces the origins of the ancient Israelites. The first four chapters explain why the author feels that this work is necessary and provide brief summaries of early scholarly models for the emergence of Israel (conquest, infiltration, and revolt). Next are three chapters devoted to summarizing the archaeological data from excavations and surveys that bear on the subject. Two chapters evaluate more recent models on the origins of Israel. William G. Dever devotes the tenth chapter to his own theory of Israelite origins (an agrarian frontier model). The final two chapters discuss whether there is sufficient evidence to identify Israel as a distinct ethnic group in the Iron I period and how one might salvage presettlement traditions (e.g., Exodus).
Dever is partially successful in answering the questions posed in the book’s title. The archaeological data from excavations and surveys attest to a population explosion of numerous village sites in the central hill country at the beginning of the Iron period. The cultural assemblages of these sites have clear affinities to the previous Late Bronze Age (LBA) culture. Thus, the Iron I ancestors of the well-documented Israelites of the Iron II period were transplanted Canaanites. Moreover, the simplicity of the Iron I culture and its various adaptations aimed at maximizing agricultural success in the hills, suggesting that these transplants were primarily Canaanite peasant farmers, not pastoral nomads or urban elites. As there were virtually no settlements in the central hills during the LBA, these colonists must have come from the old lowland Canaanite heartland. This was not a mere geographic reshuffling of people; the population of all of Canaan, not merely the hills, tripled from the end of the LBA to the beginning of Iron I, from 50,000 to 150,000 persons. What Dever does not explain, and this is crucial, is what triggered such a dramatic increase in population over such a short period, especially at a time of political and economic collapse across the east Mediterranean.

Dever’s model opposes the scheme of a unified exodus from Egypt and conquest of Canaan as presented in the book of Joshua. Though he devotes a few pages to explaining how perhaps a very small group of Semitic slaves escaped Egypt and made their way to Canaan, this topic requires more extended treatment to explain truly Israelite origins. If these were the experiences of only a minority of the Iron I hill population, how did the majority come to embrace them? For example, if Yahweh was only the God of this minority group, how did he become the head of the Israelite pantheon and patron of the House of David? The search for the origins of Israel goes beyond mere pottery.

The work seems aimed at lay readers as the above limitations, and almost folksy presentation, suggest. Sometimes this is overdone. For example, why is the reader told that J. Callaway resigned his position at a conservative seminary when his excavations contradicted scriptural accounts? The early part of the text is sprinkled with such comments. Virtually all of the material presented here has been covered in greater detail by others and by Dever himself in various scholarly articles; as such, this volume is of relatively little use to academics. The lack of footnotes makes its use by students as a jump-off point for additional study limited, though the up-to-date bibliography offsets this to some extent.

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Jeffrey R. Zorn


This study, documenting the development of a Palestinian women’s movement in the period of the British mandate, 1920–48, is intended to correct an absence in the historical literature. In the author’s words, she found “a surprising silence that shrouds